CLAIMS

1. A database of information relating to a particular topic, the database including a number of portions which each contain information on a particular aspect of the topic, each portion being sub-divided into a number of sub-portions which are each linked to one another in a predetermined sequential arrangement wherein each subsequent sub-portion in the sequential arrangement contains further information on the topic.

2. A database as claimed in Claim 1, wherein the portions of the database are arranged into sets which are arranged in a predetermined sequential arrangement.

3. A database as claimed in Claim 2, wherein selected sub-portions of the database, include primary key expressions which are embedded in the information contained in said sub-portions, each primary key expression being linked to another sub-portion of the database which contains further information relating to the subject matter of the primary key expression.

4. A database as claimed in Claim 3, which includes explanatory notes, with selected sub-portions of the database, including secondary key expressions which are embedded in the information contained in said selected sub-portions and which are each linked to a particular explanatory note.

5.   A database as claimed in Claim 4, wherein selected explanatory notes include secondary key expressions which are linked to other explanatory notes of the database.

6.   A database as claimed in Claim 5, wherein selected explanatory notes include primary key expressions which are each linked to a particular sub-portion of the database.

7.   A database as claimed in Claim 6, wherein each sub-portion of each set includes a link to the first sub-portion of at least one portion of a succeeding set.

8.   A computer program product for managing the content of a database of information relating to a particular topic, wherein the database includes a number of portions which each contain information on a particular aspect of the topic and which are each sub-divided into a number of sub-portions, the computer program product including program instructions for linking the sub-portions of each portion of the database, to one another in a predetermined sequential arrangement wherein each subsequent sub-portion in the sequential arrangement contains further information on the topic.

9.   A computer program product as claimed in Claim 8, wherein selected sub-portions of the database include primary key expressions which are

embedded in the information contained in said selected sub-portions, the computer program product including program instructions for linking each primary key expression to another sub-portion of the database which contains further information relating to the subject matter of the primary key expression.

10. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 9, wherein the database includes explanatory notes and wherein selected sub-portions include secondary key expressions which are embedded in the information contained in said selected sub-portions, the computer program product including program instructions for linking each secondary key expression to a particular explanatory note.

11. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 10, wherein the explanatory notes of the database have primary key expressions embedded therein, the computer program product including program instructions for linking each primary key expression to a predetermined sub-portion of the database.

12. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 11, wherein the explanatory notes of the database have secondary key expressions embedded therein, the computer program product including program instructions for linking each secondary key expression to another explanatory note.

13. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 12, wherein the database includes default explanatory notes which each contain information in the form of an overview of the information contained in a particular sub-portion of the database, the computer program product including program instructions for displaying the default explanatory note simultaneously with the relevant sub-portion on a display device.

14. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 13, wherein portions of the database are arranged in sets which are sequentially arranged, the computer program product including instructions for linking pre-selected sub-portions of a particular portion of one set to the first sub-portion of at least one portion of succeeding set.

15. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 14, which is operable to link the portions and sub-portions of the database is effected by means of hypertext links.

16. A computer program product as claimed in Claim 15, which includes program instructions for recording the address in the database of each sub-portion of the database from which a link using a primary key expression is achieved.

17.   A computer program products as claimed in Claim 16, which includes program instructions for displaying on a display device, title information representing each sub-portion from which a link is obtained via said primary key expressions, so as to provide a user with a record of a conversation path formed by sub-portions of the database which are linked via said primary key expressions.

18.   A computer program product as claimed in Claim 17, which includes program instructions for recording and displaying said title information in an order representing the sequence in which the sub-portions were accessed by a user.

19.   A computer program product as claimed in Claim 18, which includes a feedback component including program instructions permitting any part of the information contained in a sub-portion or explanatory note of the database, to be selected by a user and for the user's selection to be recorded.

20.   A computer program product as claimed in Claim 19, including a monitoring component which includes program instructions for recording users' selections of primary and secondary key expressions.

21.   An information management product which comprises:

a database component containing information relating to a particular topic, the database component including a number of portions which each contain information on a particular aspect of the topic and which are each sub-divided into a number of sub-portions; and

a computer program component for managing the content of the database, the computer program component including program instructions for linking the sub-portions of each portion of the database to one another in a predetermined sequential arrangement wherein each subsequent sub-portion in the sequential arrangement contains further information on the topic.

22.   An information management product as claimed in Claim 21, wherein the database component is equivalent to the database as defined in Claims 1 to 7.

23.   An information management product as claimed in Claim 22, wherein the computer program component is equivalent to the computer program product as claimed in Claims 8 to 20.

24.   A method of compiling a database of information relating to a particular topic, which includes the steps of:

compiling a number of portions of the database, wherein each portion contains information on a particular aspect of the topic and wherein each portion is sub-divided into a number of sub-portions;

defining primary key expressions in the information contained in selected sub-portions of the database; and

creating user-executable links between each primary key expression and another sub-portion of the database which contains further information relating to the subject matter of the primary key expressions.

25.   A method of compiling a database of information relating to a particular topic, which includes the steps of :

compiling a number of portions of the database, wherein each portion contains information on a particular aspect of the topic and wherein each portion is sub-divided into a number of sub-portions; and

linking each of the sub-portions of each portion of the database to one another in a predetermined sequential arrangement wherein each subsequent sub-portion in the sequential arrangement contains further information on the topic.

26.   A new database of information substantially as described in the specification.

27.   A database of information substantially as described in the specification, with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.

28.   A new computer program product substantially as described in the specification.

29.   A computer program product substantially as described in the specification, with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.

30.   A new information management product substantially as described in the specification.

31.   An information management product substantially as described in the specification, with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.

32.   A new method of compiling a database of information substantially as described in the specification.

33.   A method of compiling a database of information substantially as described in the specification, with reference to and as illustrated in the accompanying diagrammatic drawings.